NewsRelease

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

Astronaut visiting Langley, Va. State Fair Sept. 25 & 26

On Monday, Sept. 25, astronaut Christopher J. "Gus" Loria will visit the Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va., to talk to its employees about NASA's human spaceflight programs and present seven Langley personnel with prestigious merit awards. On Tuesday, Sept. 26, he will talk with students and meet the public at the Virginia State Fair in Richmond, Va.

Photo Opportunities, Media Availability:

Monday, Sept. 25, at the NASA Langley Research Center, Hampton, Va.
From 1 to 1:30 p.m., in the NASA Langley Aircraft Hangar. With a NASA T-38 aircraft as a backdrop, Loria will be available to news media for photos and interviews. Members of the news media are also invited to hear Loria's address to employees at 2:00 p.m. For more information or to schedule, contact Bob Allen at (757) 864-6176.

Tuesday, Sept. 26, at the Virginia State Fair, Richmond, Va.
From 11:45 a.m. until 12p.m., outside the Commonwealth Technology Center at the Virginia State Fair. Loria will be available to members of the news media for a brief photo and interview opportunity at the conclusion of his lunch with a group of about 25 middle school students. For more information, contact Bob Allen, (757) 864-6176 or Kimberly Land, (757) 864-9885.

At the NASA Langley Sept. 25:

At 2p.m., Sept. 25, Loria will deliver a colloquium address called "NASA Today and Tomorrow," about the International Space Station and Space Shuttle programs in Langley's H.J.E. Reid Conference Center. After his talk, he will present seven Langley employees "Silver Snoopy" awards on behalf of the astronaut corps.

The "Silver Snoopy" is the astronauts' award for outstanding performance contributing to flight safety or mission success. Always presented by an astronaut, the Silver Snoopy Award consists of a sterling silver Snoopy lapel pin that has flown aboard a Space Shuttle mission.

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At the Virginia State Fair, Sept. 26:

Loria will talk with middle school and high school students in the fairground amphitheater at 10:30 a.m. At 11:15 a.m., he will lunch with a group of about 25 students from Gayle Middle School in Fredericksburg, Va. From noon to 1 p.m., Loria will visit Langley's Virginia State Fair exhibit in the Commonwealth Technology Center and meet the public.

Gayle Middle School is part of the Technology Student Association (TSA), a national technology education awareness program that gives students expanded opportunities to learn about technology industries and develop and demonstrate their technological abilities. Gayle students have won statewide honors in TSA programs and competed in regional TSA events.

About Gus Loria:

Loria is a flight-qualified space shuttle pilot. Most recently, he served as a CapCom, or Capsule Communicator, for space shuttle mission STS-106 that concluded on Sept. 20. The mission featured space shuttle Atlantis' highly successful return to the International Space Station. As CapCom, Loria was the primary voice of Mission Control to the astronauts in orbit.

A distinguished former U.S. Marine Corps test pilot, Loria's prior honors and awards include: Naval Test Wing Atlantic Pilot of the Year 1995-1996, the Meritorious Service Medal, two Navy Commendation Medals (1 with "V"), two Air Medals (both with "V"), four Strike Flight Air Medals and the Navy Achievement Medal.

Loria is a member of many organizations, including the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) and the Aircraft Owners & Pilots Assoc. (AOPA).

Loria has logged 2,000 hours of flight time in more than 35 different aircraft. As a test pilot, he flew NASA's X-31, F/A-18 High Alpha Research Vehicle (HARV) and F-16XL aircraft. In NASA's F-16XL program, he participated in physiology testing of the prototype High Altitude & Gravity System (HAGS), a combination of a gravity-suit and a partial-pressure suit.

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